

Message Text

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SUBJECT: NEW GREEK CABINET

REF: ATHENS 8337

1. SUMMARY. THE NEW GREEK CABINET OF NINETEEN MINISTERS AND SIXTEEN UNDER MINISTERS IS AN EXPERIENCED AND TECHNICALLY WELL-QUALIFIED TEAM. CARAMANLIS HAS RETAINED HIS MINISTERS OF DEFENSE AND PUBLIC ORDER, PUT FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND EDUCATION IN THE HANDS OF NON-PARTISAN PROFESSIONALS, AND REWARDED THOSE WHO SERVED HIM WELL A DECADE AGO AND WERE ELECTED WITH HIM LAST WEEK. UNLIKE THE FIRST, NATIONAL UNITY CARAMANLIS CABINET OF THE SUMMER, WHICH HAD YOUNGER, MORE AGGRESSIVE, AND DISTINCLY GERMAN-EDUCATED STANDOUTS, LARGELY FROM THE CU, THIS GROUP IS MORE HOMOGENEOUS. HALF THE CABINET HAS BEEN EDUCATED ABROAD, ALTHOUGH TWENTY-NINE OF THE THIRTY-FIVE MEMBERS FIRST DID THEIR UNDER-GRADUATE WORK AT ATHENS UNIVERSITY. THE GROUP IS COSMOPOLITAN BUT DISTINCTLY NATIONALIST. END SUMMARY.

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2. PROFILE. THE THIRTY-FIVE CABINET OFFICERS INCLUDE FORMER DEPUTIES OF CARAMANLIS' OLD RADICAL UNION (9 PERSONS); FORMER MINISTERS UNDER CARAMANLIS (9 BEFORE THE JUNTA AND 12 IN THIS YEAR'S POST-JUNTA OR CARETAKER CABINETS); NEW BLOOD IN THE NEW DEMOCRACY PARTY (13 ELECTED FOR FIRST TIME LAST WEEK); AND A SURPRISING NUMBER OF ESSENTIALLY APOLITICAL PERSONALITIES (FOUR ARE DRAWN FROM THE NON-ELECTED NATIONAL DEPUTIES AND FIVE HAVE NO SEATS IN PARLIAMENT). THE RESISTANCE IS REPRESENTED IN THAT AT LEAST SIX WERE IMPRISONED AFTER THE 1967 COUP AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER, MOSTLY IN THE EARLY JUNTA YEARS. THE CABINET REPRESENTS EVERY MAJOR REGION OF GREECE EXCEPT FOR THRACE AND THE ISLANDS. CRETE GOT ONE POST, EVEN THOUGH CARAMANLIS DREW HIS LOWEST VOTE TALLY THERE. SEVEN WERE BORN IN ATHENS, BUT ALL BUT FOUR NOW RESIDE IN THE CAPITAL. ABOUT HALF THE CABINET HAS HAD GRADUATE STUDY ABROAD AND THE FOREIGN ROOTS ARE WIDELY DISTRIBUTED: UNITED STATES (6), FRANCE (5), SWITZERLAND (3), GERMANY (4), UNITED KINGDOM (3), ITALY(1). AMONG THOSE FULL MINISTERS WITH NOTEWORTHY AMERICAN CONNECTIONS ARE MINISTER OF FINANCE DEVLETOGLOU WITH A PH.D. FROM COLUMBIA AND MINISTER OF CULTURE AND SCIENCE TRYPANIS WHO UNTIL THIS SUMMER WAS PROFESSOR OF CLASSICS AT CHICAGO UNIVERSITY. UNDER SECRETARY FOR COORDINATION KONTOTHEODORIS WAS AN EISENHOWER FELLOW IN 1957. THE MINISTER'S AVERAGE AGE IS 58 AND THE UNDER MINISTERS 53.

3. PROSPECTS. CARAMANLIS HAS KEPT GHIKAS (AGE 76) IN PUBLIC ROLES AND AVEROFF AT NATIONAL DEFENSE, AS WELL AS RETAINING THE DEPUTY DEFENSE MINISTER, RETIRED GENERAL KATSADIMAS. APPARENTLY THE PRIME MINISTER FEELS HE CHOSE WELL IN THESE KEY POSITIONS IN THE FIRST PLACE AND FAVORS CONTINUITY IN THE CRUCIAL MILITARY AND SECURITY AREAS. HIS RETENTION OF CAREER AMBASSADOR BITSIOS AS FOREIGN MINISTER, THOUGH NAMING JOHN VARVITSIOTIS AS HIS DEPUTY INJECTS POLITICAL ELEMENT, AND OF ACADEMICIAN ZEPPOS TO EDUCATION ARE TO SOME EXTENT SURPRISES, EVEN THOUGH BOTH MEN WON GENERAL ACCLAMATION FOR THEIR PERFORMANCES IN THE CARETAKER CABINET. ZEPPOS, WHO HAD MUCH TO DO AS INTERIOR MINISTER, PARTICULARLY RECEIVED BIPARTISAN PRAISE. THE PLACEMENT OF TWO APOLITICAL MEN AT THE HELM OF CYPRUS POLICY AND UNIVERSITY REFORM/STUDENT RELATIONS SUGGESTS THAT CARAMANLIS' STRATEGY FOR HANDLING THESE HOT POTATOES WILL BE TO TRY AND KEEP THEM AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE OUT OF THE POLITICAL ARENA.

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4. IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE LEADING PERSONALITIES WHO WERE NOT NAMED TO THE CABINET DESPITE PREVIOUS SPECULATION. CARAMANLIS APPOINTED KEY FIGURES LIKE RALLIS AND PAPALIGOURAS, BUT HE DID NOT INCLUDE TWO OF HIS CLOSEST FRIENDS, CONSTANTINE PAPACOSTANTINOU AND CONSTANTINE TSATSOS. THE FORMER IS EXPECTED TO BE ELECTED SPEAKER OF THE PARLIAMENT AND THE LATTER TO CHAIR DRAFTING COMMITTEE FOR CONSTITUTION. THE NEW DEMOCRACY NUMBER ONE VOTE

GETTER IN ATHENS AND THE PREMIER'S SHADOW DURING THE ELECTION, NICOS ANAGNOSTOPOULOS, WAS NOT INCLUDED. SIX OF CARAMANLIS' JULY MINISTERS, ALTHOUGH ELECTED DEPUTY, HAVE NOT BEEN RETAINED IN THE CABINET. THE MINISTRY FOR NORTHERN GREECE HAS FINALLY BEEN REVIVED BY CARAMANLIS BY NAMING LOCAL THESSALONIKIAN MARTIS, A CLOSE FRIEND OF CARAMANLIS, BUT THERE ARE ONLY THREE BESIDES THE PRIME MINISTER FROM THE NORTH AMONG THE THIRTY-FIVE. TWO UNDER MINISTERS, CULTURE AND THE SECOND SLOT IN COORDINATION, HAVE APPARENTLY BEEN ABOLISHED.

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